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LETTERS OF EDWARD BURD.

BY THOMAS LYNCH MONTGOMERY.

(Continued from page 68.)

Philad^a April 7th 1766.

Dear and honoured Sir

We have just received the agreeable News by a Lre from Maryland that the Repeal of the Stamp-Act had been resolved in Parliament by a Great Majority: The Bells toned in their most musical Changes per totum Diem. But Heaven drooped; the Air was unhealthy; a drizzly, soaking cold Rain damped my Pleasures on this joyful Day. For I am generally affected by the Weather. The moderate Influence of the Sun in Spring Season produces a contrary & superior Effect to culinary Heat. When we chance to have good Weather I feel lightened, renewed enlivened & can enjoy the Benefit of the open Air with extreme Satisfaction; But when the contrary happens I had much rather confine myself to Home, Fire & Book.

M^r Allen, his two accomplished Daughters, his four Sons and M^r Stewart attend pretty constantly and fill their Pew. One day as I attempted to go into another Pew M^r Jn^o Allen pulled me back & went out himself. Aunt Shippen was very kind & offered me a Seat in Church, I have accepted it 'till you could provide me with one in Meeting, (The Cost of which would be annually 10) as I was Sensible you would be unwilling M^r Allen's Family should be incommoded. If my Memory does not fail, I mentioned something of the

Matter, when I had last the Happiness of seeing you,
I am

Dear Sir

Your most affectionate
and dutiful Son

Edward Burd

To

James Burd Esquire
at Lancaster

Philadelphia 26th Ap^l 1772

Dear & honoured Sir

I am just going with Billy Allen to Chester from whence he is to embark for Madeira where he designs to make a Fortune by Trade.

I am sorry to observe that it does not appear from the Commission you lately sent down at what *place* or *time* it was executed—which is so material Circumstance that your Attorney can do Nothing without it for W^m Dewar may allege that his Commission was ^{·w^{ch}} could not be disproved by the Commission itself; You will therefore be pleased to bring the other blank Commission to Lancaster with you & get it properly executed.—

Uncle E.S. told me there was a dutch Ship in Port & desired me to buy a Servant for you—but the Information came so late that there were but two or three remaining Who were middle aged, understood nothing of farming & would serve only two Years—since which there has been no more vessels with Serv^{ts} that I know of. Please to give my Duty to Mama & Love to my Brothers & Sisters Mr. A. Allen has been so kind as to give me the prosecution for ye Crown in Northumberld County. I am hon^d Sir,

Your affec^{tn} & dutiful Son

Edw^d Burd.

To James Burd Esq^r
Tinian

Reading 4th July 1775.

Dear & honoured Sir

Hearing that a Number of Troops were to be raised in this Province, I resolved to march with them, thinking my Friends would have no Objection to my going on such an Occassion—I knew the Sentiments of all my Family to be favorable to the Cause of Liberty in which we were engaged—The Committee immediately recommended me for the Office of first Lieut & I went out on the recruiting Service—At My Return I found that my Uncle disapproved of my acting as one of the Officers of a Rifle Company being not sufficiently qualified for the Purpose by Knowledge in Rifle Shooting or being bred to Hardships—With Respect to the first Col: Thompson said it was not so necessary for an Officer as he wo^d not be obliged to fire often but only to order his Men properly. As to bearing fatigue I thought myself able to bear it as any other young Fellow. However, in Deference to my Uncle's Judgm^t I shall give up the Command in the Rifle Comp^y & purpose acting as a Volunteer in the Army, for 2 or 3 Months, so as to return to the Novem^r Court. As the Matter is so publick, I cannot retract with Honor, altogether—And this Step will I think be of great Service to me in Many Instances, I shall gain a little military Knowledge, perhaps get acquainted with some Gentlemen of Worth & see a little of the World & the Situation of affairs at Boston When I return be better able to serve my Country—I trust my Friends will not oppose this Design, If they do, I shall not be so happy as either they or I would wish myself.

I have wrote to my Uncle E. S. & Hope to have a favorable Answer from that Quarter I have that Confidence in you As to think you will applaud my Courage—There is very little Danger & I hope your Son will not make you appear with Dishonor—

I expect to be up at Tinian the latter of this Week with Mr. Dundas if possible.

I beg my Duty to my Mother & Love to My Brother & Sister, I am

D^r Sir

Your ever affectionate
& dutiful Son

Edw Burd.

P. S. M^r Turnbull
who takes this Letter
is a clever Gentleman
I do not know whether he
will take it to Tinian or
not if he does please to shew
him some Civility

To James Burd Esq^r

Tinian

near Middletown

Pr favor

Mr. Turnbull

Camp at Prospect Hill,
2d. October 1775.

Dear & honoured Sir—

As Captⁿ Ross can so conveniently take you a Line for me it encourages me to write—For altho' I am certain that I have wrote a dozen Letters to Lancaster & Tinian yet to my great Sorrow I find not one of them has been received—This to you must be a Matter of some Anxiety considering I am at a Camp where many Accidents might happen & you be ignorant of them—You must be sensible I must have a great many Correspondents at the different places of Reading, Philadelphia & Lancaster to whom I am under a necessity of writing—I am therefore obliged to distribute my Letters at different Opportunities—but no Opportunity has past by without my writing to two or three of my

friends in Lancaster County—sometimes to yourself & my Grandfather—at other times to Mr Yeates & my Sister &c.

Every Thing is quiet here at present—There has been no firing these sev^l days—It is said this is in Consequence of the Arrival of a Ship from England at Boston, but there is no Certainty of that Matter.

A Deserter went into Bunker Hill about a week ago who told the Regulars we intended an Attack there the Night before last but nothing of the Kind was attempted, However it kept the Regulars all Night under Arms—Their Light Horse were patrolling the whole Evening—I went down with Col. Hand who was Officer of the Day & went the grand Rounds—We were at the most advanced Centries & could plainly hear the Regulars hard at Work—They have at different Times shot several thousand Cannon Balls besides a great Number of Bomb Shells & have not killed above 3 or 4 of our people & wounded 5 or 6. It is really astonishing.

I begin to be almost tired of the Camp I am only spending my time & Money here & I have not seen any Expedition going on. It is true we have several Times gone out in Expectation of an Engagement but I begin to Despair of one—I think to set off next Week on my Return to Pennsylvania unless they buoy me up with fresh Expectations but I think it will be only injuring myself without serving the publick to stay any longer—

Since writing the above I have seen Genl. Lee who told me, he heard I was going Home; I told him I Should go soon—Why says he you are just going at the Time of Action—I answered that I saw no Likelihood of it—He mentions that Genl. Gage will set off for England ye 5th Inst. & Genl. Howe will command in Boston & Gen Burgoyne at Bunker's Hill—

I told Gen. Lee it was very inconvenient for me to remain here, he said it was so for him—But I am determined to be home at the November Court.

Please to give my Duty to my Mother & love to all
my Brothers & Sisters, I am Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate & dutiful Son

Edw. Burd.

To James Burd Esquire
Tinian

Philad^a 18th Ap^l 1780

Dear & honoured Sir—

I would have wrote you by Abner Wickersham but was prevented by people who dropped in when I had begun the Letter.

I observe you mention May or June as the Time of celebrating my Sisters Nuptials, I wish it could be so contrived as to happen on my Return from the Court at Carlisle—I would not wish to interfere with any Scheme that may be in View nor retard the Happiness of the Lovers nor would I be understood as making the Request unless ye Time is totally unfixed—Mr. Yeates & I will be at Carlisle ye 22d May We shall continue there about 8 or 10 days & ye Circuit I expect will then be over I should like to spend 2 or 3 days at Tinian upon my Return—[torn] wo'd be inconvenience as ye Court at Philadelphia will be held ye beginning of June & I have some Causes of very great Importance to try.

Betsy has had repeated attacks of the chilly fits & fevers, she had one about a Week ago but has been quite well of them these 2 or 3 days. Our Son has had the small-pox finally only 2 pox appeared to have filled well—He is now perfectly well & if you will allow a Parent to brag a little I would say he is as fine a Child as ever I saw—He is very lively & good humoured is very strong & has fine Springs—It will be some time before I can take him up on Horseback with me to see you—I sent a paper to my Gd father this Week. There is Nothing very particular except that ye Islands & the Southern Countries will have monstrous fleets & armies contending for them this Summer. Betsy joins me in

her most affectionate Respects to yourself My Mother
& ye family—I am Dr Sir

Your very affectionate &
dutiful Son

Edw Burd.

James Burd Esquire
Tinian

Lanc^r 12th June, 1783

Dear & honoured Sir—

I wrote you a Letter lately by Mr. Oberlander's which
I hope you have received—

A Little before I set off from Philad^a M^r Shippen
mentioned to me a plan respecting the Shippensburg
Estate which I thought for the mutual Advantage to all
Parties & absolutely necessary—

You & my Mother have executed a Power of Attor-
ney to ye Mr. Shippens to sell Lands & Lotts & to lease
Lots on Ground Rent in Shippensburg for your mutual
Interest—This will do very well, as long Things con-
tinue in their present Situation but if any Accident
should happen to my Mother as She can make no Will
of that Estate it must remain in an unimproved State
'till the youngest of the Grubbs come of Age, be of
little Advantage to y^e other Children, check the Growth
of y^e Town in the meanwhile besides, & you in Case of
Survivorship not derive that Benefit from an Interest
of your Wife's which you in Justice ought to have.

To avoid these Inconveniences Writings are drawn
up not only between you & my Mother & her Brothers
but between themselves that in Case one of them should
die the other shall have the Management—I have not
the Deed by me but from my Recollection the purport
of it is To convey the legal Interest to Mr. Edwd. &
Joseph Shippen in fee in Jointenancy

Upon Trust

that they may sell Land sell or lease Lots on Gd. Rent
&c &c—& pay you a third part of the Purchase Money

—if either you or my Mother should die the Trust is to be at an End & they are to stand seized to the use of the Survivor of you in fee & make a Conveyance accordingly.

Something of this Kind appears absolutely necessary The two Mr. Shippens are good Managers & good Stewards both able & honest so that as they are willing to take the Trouble upon themselves I do not think you could be able to get more wise or honest Agents & if you should survive my Mother it wo^d be very hard you should not enjoy the Income of her Estate managed to the best advantage & it would be injurious to all the Children if the Estate must sleep during the Minority of the youngest of them.

For these Reasons the Plan appears reasonable & necessary to Mr. Yeates & myself who have examined the writings. Mr. Shippen will I suppose deliver you this Letter & as he has the writings upon reading them over you will find ye object as I have stated it to the Mutual Interest & Convenience of the Parties Concerned—Nothing else would be proposed by them to you nor could I give any Concurrence if it were proposed—

I am with my Duty to my Mother & Love to my Brothers & Sisters,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate
& Dutiful Son

Edw Burd.

James Burd Esquire

Tinian

Please to send ye inclosed
Letters as soon as you can

Phi 9 Sep. 1783—

Dear & honoured Sir

I inclose you a Copy of a Note to me from D^r Morgan in which he requests you to certify the Names & Rank

of such Officers as you know served in the last War before 1763 & were intitled to Lands under the proclamation, a Copy of which I inclose—I Also inclose a List of Officers Names for your Recollection; if you have any papers that will assist your Memory be pleased to look at them—It wd. be best to make three Certificates; one of those Officers who served under you—another, of those who served under Col. Armstrong; a third of those who Served under Col. Mercer—The two last or at least Genl. Armstrong is not so material as ye first, because Genl. Armstrong can certify his own officers but Col. Mercer is dead—

Mr. Robert Irwin & Jacob Hiltzheimer puts in Claims as Staff Officer y^e 1st as a Waggon Master ye other as Deputy Waggon Master, if you know any Thing of their Service in that Capacity make a separate Certificate of it & of the time of their Service. It is of Consequence to have this Certificate immediately to be forwarded to ye Assembly of Virginia who meet in ye Beginning of October or we shall lose ye Sessions & perhaps may not meet again with so favourable an Opportunity of procuring ye Lands—

I am under some Apprehensions about my Office—The Assembly have a plan in Agitation to give it original Jurisdiction & tax it highly & prevent my practice as a Lawyer in the County Courts—I should rather call it a plan of some Gen^t of ye Law in the House—as Nothing but private Interest or a Degree of Enmity not easy to be accounted for could have raised ye Idea—I do not expect that ye measure will be carried thro—It is not even pretended that my practice is at all injurious to ye public but only that it may give me an Opportunity or getting more Business than some other Gentⁿ. Such Argument I trust will never be thought Sufficient by a House of Assembly of Pennsylvania to say that I shall not make money in any honest way that does not interfere with my Office & Duty to ye publick

—If however it should be carried against me—I shall be under the Necessity of resigning my Office. This will of Course reduce my Income to so small a Sum that I must at first live with great Oconomy & shall not be able to take my Brother; my principal Design in it wo^d also be abortive which wo^d be when he was qualified to afford him some Employment in it as a Deputy. This plan must be kept a profound Secret. I was in great hopes of being able to do something for him in that way—If I lose my Office it will not be in my Power—My Reason for chusing rather to give up my Office than my practice is that my Business as an Atty wo^d be constantly increasing & I should be an independent Man—but in ye other office they wo^d be always for cutting off my advantages I sho^d become a totally dependent Man—Betsy joins me in Love to my Mother Mr. & M^{rs} Patterson & my Brothers & Sisters, I sho^d be very happy to know ye State of their Health. The Town is very sickly.

Y^r affect & dutiful son

E Burd.

D^r Morgan has an Account of several Sums of Money that were paid to you by the Officers who subscribed an Agreement to endeavour to procure Lands on the Ohio. If there were any such Monies paid to you it will be proper for you to shew in what manner it was applied & if any still remains in your hands undisposed of.

Ph. 9 March 1785.

Dear & honoured Sir—

I have just received your favor of yr 19^t feb^r—I think if you could get £100 for your Virgⁿ Rights it would be so much Saved out of ye fire—as I am convinced it will never be worth a farthing—some such Words as these might be made use of—all my Rights Claim Property, or Demand whatsoever if any Such I

have to any Lands in America by Virtue of ye Proclⁿ of George 3^d King of G. Britain &c dated in ye Year 1763 also to the Lands surveyed by Capt. Wm. Thompson under ye sd Proclⁿ to any Use part^l described in this Deed—

Mr. Kern has not called on me, I will keep the paper some little time by me to shew him if he calls & then send them to you.

I herewith send to your Care alone a pair of Breiches & pair of Stockings for John Paul.

I beg my Love to all ye family & am D. Sir,

Your affect & Dutiful Son

E Burd.

Col James Burd

The C^y of Dauphin is agreed upon—

the Town is to be at Harris's ferry

Alex^r Graydon Son of Mrs. Graydon

is prot^y—Mr. Joseph Montgomery I believe

will be Recorder & Register.

Philad^a 17 March 1786.

Dear & honoured Sir—

Circumstances have happened since writing my last Letter that make me wish to have my Brother Jo here as soon as possible—Be pleased therefore, to send for him as soon as you can Conveniently after Receipt of this Letter—Mr. Yeates will Settle his Board & Schooling at y^e next Court as usual—You can send a Servant & Horses with him to Lancaster so as to be there on a Sunday or Monday Evening, in order that he may be ready for y^e Stage which Sets off from Lancaster on Tuesday morning early for Philad.

We shall have a great deal of Trouble with He found that ye Line dividing Dauphin & Lancaster Counties did not take in his furnace as he thought it did & got a Petⁿ signd by 148 people to have y^e Line altered & to run along y^e South Mountain along ye Lines of Lebanon & Heidleberg Townships so as to di-

vide ye furnace from ye forge, putting one of them in Laner & ye other in Dauphin Coy.

I had notice of it & presented a Counter Petn. on which we have had a Meeting before a Committee of ye House & I am in great hopes that he will not gain his point—His Object was to have ye large Estate at a Valuation because a Jury of Lanc^r Co^{ty} could not take ye Estate in another Co^{ty} into their Confid^e & then to have ye furnace Estate valued also because a Jury of Dauphin County could not take the forge Estate into Confid^e & then he as elder Son would be able to take both Estates as a Valuation—

Report says that Mr. Yeates has executed an Inquisⁿ of forcible entry & Detainer respecting ye forge that he has been put in Possⁿ & has taken the Books to Lan^c I hope it is true as it is a matter of great Consequence to ye Children—

Betsy expect's every day to be confined but matters are so arranged that We can entertain Jo without much Inconvenience—I beg my kindest Respects to my Brothers & Sisters—Tell Jimmy I have bot him some valuable Lands in N. Cuningham District of w^h I will give him Information in my next.

I am D Sir,

Your affect & dutiful

Son,

E. Burd.

James Burd Esquire
Tinian

12 April 1786.

Dear & honoured Sir—

I have the pleasure to inform you that on Thursday last Betsy brought me a fine Girl & is much better than she usually has been on such Occasions—She begs her kindest love to you & y^e family—We shall call our little one Sarah—

As my Brother Jo is not yet Come to town he had

better remain at Carlisle 'till after y^e Spring Circuit—I expect to be at Tinian ab^t y^e 20^r or 21^s May—y^e Court at Carlisle will be y^e 22^d May—

I should wish my Brother Jemmy wo^d come to Lancaster at ye time of the Co^{ty} Court there & we will endeavour to settle his arrangement for ye ensuing Summer. Mr. Cuningham will set off about y^e Middle of May—I have bought Jemmy 4 Tracts of Land one of them is a River Tract No. 8 in y^e middle of Cayathates old Town on y^e Allegheny about 6 miles from Fort Pitt, another a little back of it—a 3d on ye River about 3 miles from ye ft & a fourth also near ye River, I got them very cheap & believe it is a pretty little Estate—There is a very fine Spring in No. 8—I could hardly get it as other people had their Eye also on it—

I beg my Love to by Sisters & Brother.

I am D. Sr.

Your affectionate
& dutiful Son,
Edw. Burd.

James Burd Esq^r
Tinian

Reading August 11th 1786

Dear & honoured Sir

I inclose you a rough Draft of a will which if agreeably to your Intentions you will please to Copy in your own hand & execute in presence of 4 reputable witnesses—

There is only one new Idea in it since our Conversation which Mr. Yeates & I on talking the Matter over thought there would be propriety in adding—which respects your affairs in nothing—How your own family are there Situate we know not—Whether their Circumstances are not reduced & whether they have not been under ye Necessity of intrenching upon what might legally be considered as your property. To distress them would be a Measure repugnant to every feeling I

possess—To assist them if in my power would be my greatest pride without injury to those who have more immediate Claims upon me—but an Attack upon that family might be impossible to be prevented if the property was to be divided among a great many branches of our family here—It would therefore perhaps be more advisable to put the management of that business wholly in my power to Act in it according to Circumstances—If any thing will ever be had from that quarter it wo^d put it in my power (in Case any of our own family should be unfortunate) to afford them greater Assistance than I should otherwise be able to do—I intend to endeavour to gain some Intelligence respecting ye family soon—This Idea respecting ye Estate in Scotland took its rise intirely from Mr. Yeates—If however it should not be agreeable to your Opinion ye Clause may be left out.

We have been thinking about ye expected proposals of Mr. Hubley to my Sister Peggy—We think M^r Hubley possessed of a great deal of Merit both as to his general Conduct in life & Industry & good sense tho he has not had all ye advantages of a liberal Education. He appears also to have a mild & easy Temper & doubt not he would make Peggy a good Husband. If he is agreeable to Peggy It will then be a duty incumbent on you to know his Situation & prospects—He should not think of marrying her unless from his Business or pres^t State of property he is capable of Maintaining her without Assistance from you & it would be Right to inform him that altho you are possessed of some property which will fall to your Children at some future time yet it will not admit of your giving away any portions of it with any kind of Justice to yourself & those Children who are to be maintained by you. If such an Event should take place perhaps Mr. Yeates & I might ad [torn] small matter to purchase Cloathes Bedding &

some few Necessaries & I suppose it will not be convenient for you to advance any thing more—

It will be very well to shew the Will to Mr. Yeates before it is executed & then after Execution to send it inclosed in a Letter to Uncle Shippen to be kept—

I hope you got safe home without any Accident—I heard that you returned on Tuesday.

I beg my Love to my Brothers & Sisters—& am

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Son,

Edw. Burd.

P. S. Mr. Patterson told me that upon Inquiry he found that ye Mill could not be purchased for a smaller Sum than £3000—that he looked upon it to be not worth more than £1700 & has therefore Dropt all thoughts & intends to continue in his present way till some advantageous Bargain offers by which delay too he will be able to receive his Monies & be better able to make a purchase—I think it is best to purpose to Stoner to run ye line backwards & forwards—If you have ye description Jemmy could do it himself & make the Ditch on the line which will be a lasting Evidence for both parties—& I would have a good sizeable Tree planted at ye lower Corner in presence of both parties & of witnesses.

James Burd Esquire

Tinian